

BOOK REVIEWS



We have received a large number of interesting and informative books and other publications in recent months. Here are just a few of them; we will mention more in our future issues:

• **CAVALIER IN BUCKSKIN: GEORGE ARMSTRONG CUSTER AND THE WESTERN MILITARY FRONTIER.** By Robert M. Utley (University of Oklahoma Press, 1988. 244 Pages. \$19.95). This is the first in a new series titled *The Oklahoma Western Biographies*, and it is an excellent beginning, largely because the author, Robert Utley, knows more about the U.S. Army on the western frontier during the 19th century than anyone else now writing. He has written extensively on that army, the men who led it (including Custer), and those who fought in its ranks. Although this is not a detailed biography in the strict sense of the word, Utley does not in any way slight his subject. In fact, he raises a number of fascinating questions about Custer and the army of his times and provides some interesting answers. He does a fine job and his book should be read by all U.S. military professionals.

• **HOOD'S TEXAS BRIGADE: TOM JONES' SKETCH BOOK MILITARY NUMBER ONE** (Hill College Press, P.O. Box 619, Hillsboro, TX 76645. 1988. \$15.00). Tom Jones is a well-known free-lance artist who has lived in Texas for most of his 68 years. He has long-standing ties with Hood's Texas Brigade—his great-grandfather served with that unit until his death at Gaines' Mill in 1862—and served as president of the brigade's association in the 1970s. He divides his book into four major parts—photographic interpretations, uniforms and accoutrements, battle standards, and military statuettes. His sketches are authentic in every detail and his accompanying commentaries are historically accurate.

• **SOLDIERS, SUTLERS, AND SETTLERS: GARRISON LIFE ON**

THE TEXAS FRONTIER. By Robert Wooster (Texas A&M University Press, 1987. 240 Pages. \$22.95). An outstanding book in all respects, it is the second in the Clayton Wheat Williams Texas Life Series. The author concentrates his well done narrative on the years from 1848 to 1890, "during which the U.S. Army maintained its strongest and most significant presence in the Lone Star State." In actuality, his book is as much a social and cultural history of the entire U.S. Army on the western frontier as it is a history of the Army in Texas in the years before and following the Civil War. The numerous sketches by Jack Jackson add much to the book's historical value. The author's major interest is not in giving the details of the numerous military expeditions but in giving "an accurate description of life at these complex military forts in a manner which appeals to the general reading public as well as the interested scholar." This he does, and we urge all U.S. infantrymen to read his book.

• **MILITARY PISTOLS AND REVOLVERS.** By Ian V. Hogg (Sterling, 1987. 128 Pages. \$24.95). Ian Hogg is one of the world's foremost authorities on military small arms, and we have mentioned his name many times in this section of our bulletin. In this particular book, which is a greatly expanded and up-dated version of a 1970 work, Hogg tells the story of the most significant pistols and revolvers used by the world's armies from the early 19th century to the present. Each weapon is described and illustrated, with full data and notes on performance, loading, stripping, and cleaning. This is an outstanding reference book, one that nicely complements the author's 1978 book (written with the late John Weeks) titled *PISTOLS OF THE WORLD*.

• **VIETNAM WAR LITERATURE: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF IMAGINATIVE WORKS ABOUT**

AMERICANS FIGHTING IN VIETNAM. Second Edition. By John Newman with Ann Hilfinger (Scarecrow Press, 1988. 299 Pages. \$27.50). An expanded version of the first edition that was published in 1982, this book lists more than 400 novels plus a large number of plays, short stories, books of poems, and other imaginative works. The arrangement is chronological within five major categories, and there are author and title indexes. Only those works that could actually be read and annotated have been included.

• **THE CIVIL WAR DICTIONARY.** Revised Edition. By Mark M. Boatner III (David McKay, 1988. 994 Pages. \$29.95). Although several corrected reprints of the original 1959 edition have appeared from time to time, this is the first completely revised version. More than half of the entries are devoted to people, with military operations drawing the second largest number. Most of the entries are short and incisive because the author wanted to have as many entries as possible in his book. He makes the point that his work should not be considered "the ultimate source book of Civil War history" but should be looked on as a vehicle to direct further research into particular areas of interest.

• **BORDER AND TERRITORIAL DISPUTES.** Second Edition. Edited by Alan J. Day (Gale, 1987. 462 Pages. \$120.00). This new edition of a fine reference work updates the first edition, which was published in 1982. It provides details on some 80 contemporary border and territorial disputes throughout the world. The coverage is limited to land-based disputes and does not include maritime questions. The book's five major sections cover Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the Americas and Antarctica. Maps show the area of each dispute, and the book has a select bibliography and a comprehensive index.

• **SOVIET ARMOR SINCE 1945** By

Bryan Perrett (Sterling, 1987. 160 Pages. \$24.95). With many photographs and line drawings to supplement the author's narrative, this book provides an excellent overview of the Soviet armor establishment as it was in 1945 and as it is today. Along the way, the author discusses the changes that have taken place in Soviet tanks, missiles, tactics, and theories since the end of World War II. He also offers reasons why the Soviet military establishment wanted specific weapons and tanks, how that need was met, and the degree of success each design has enjoyed in actual military operations in which they have been used.

Here are a number of our longer reviews:

SCHOLARS IN FOXHOLES: THE STORY OF THE ARMY SPECIALIZED TRAINING PROGRAM IN WORLD WAR II. By Louis E. Keefer (McFarland and Company, P.O. Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640. 1988. 308 Pages. \$24.95).

This is the story of a little-remembered U.S. Army World War II program that was developed in haste, seemingly had no real goal, disrupted the hopes and plans of thousands of young Americans who were considered above average in intellectual abilities, and eventually ended in confusion and misunderstanding. This is the well told story of that program by a former member who has worked diligently through the official records and mined the memories of hundreds of former participants in the program.

The beginning of the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) was officially announced on 17 December 1942. The stated purpose was "to provide the Army with high-grade technicians and specialists by sending qualified soldiers to colleges chosen by the War Department for terms of prescribed study in fields where the Army's own training facilities were inadequate." An unspoken, but very real reason for the program, was to keep many of the colleges and universities in the country on a financially sound footing.

The soldiers accepted into the program were chosen largely on the basis of their predicted learning abilities. While at college, they were to be on active duty, were to be under military discipline, and

were to receive regular Army pay.

The first courses began in March 1943 and, as the author writes, "ASTP was to become the largest single college training program this country ever implemented."

Unfortunately, because of a need to fill the ranks of its ground combat units later that year, the Army in December 1943 chose the policy of bodies before brains and began to reduce the number of men in the program. At least two of every three soldier-students, who had expected to spend at least two years working toward a college degree, unceremoniously became privates in the infantry or another fighting branch just in time to take part in some of the worst combat of the war. They performed well and at least one former ASTP'er was awarded the Medal of Honor. No unit ever regretted receiving them as fillers or replacements.

The author has given us the first complete and detailed history of the ASTP program. It contains many lessons for today's mobilization planners.

THE MILITARY BALANCE, 1988-1989. Prepared by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (London, 1988. 260 Pages. \$29.50, Softbound).

With its data current as of June 1988, this annual publication contains a comprehensive review of the world's military forces and defense expenditures. The data on more than 140 countries show the changes that have occurred during the preceding 12 months.

In addition to the usual three main sections, this edition includes an analysis of the current state of chemical and biological warfare, and a table that gives examples of military aid furnished by some NATO members. Once again, the Institute provides as a loose insert a map of Europe showing the deployment of the key equipment of the NATO and Warsaw Pact conventional forces stationed between the Atlantic Ocean and the Ural Mountains.

Of particular interest to U.S. military personnel today is the essay that discusses NATO and Warsaw Pact conventional forces (pages 233-241). This is a subject that has received a good deal of attention

in this country in recent months and will continue to do so in the months ahead.

JANE'S ARMOUR AND ARTILLERY, 1988-89. Ninth Edition. Edited by Christopher F. Foss (Jane's, 1988. 768 Pages. \$127.50).

Christopher Foss fully expects that beginning in the early 1990s many of the world's armies will begin either to upgrade their armored fighting vehicles of all kinds or order new ones. For example, he mentions the two new Soviet main battle tanks now under development—the FST-1 and the FST-2; the Stingray, a U.S. armored gun system he feels "may never enter service with the U.S. Army"; the new M113A3s now being produced in the U.S.; and new artillery, air defense, and multiple rocket systems that will offer a number of important advantages over current systems.

Some of the material that appeared in previous editions of this work—ammunition, AFV armament, turrets and cupolas, and engines—has been moved to another volume in the Jane's yearbook series: *Jane's Armoured Fighting Vehicle Systems*.

What remains is the latest available information—to 1 August 1988—on tanks; reconnaissance vehicles; APCs; AFV families; tank destroyers; SP and towed guns, howitzers, antiaircraft guns, and surface-to-air missiles; and multiple rocket launchers. An easy-to-use reference table shows all armor and artillery in service today.

AMERICAN INTERVENTION IN GRENADA: THE IMPLICATIONS OF OPERATION "URGENT FURY," edited by Peter M. Dunn and Bruce W. Watson (Westview Press, 1985. 185 Pages). Reviewed by Colonel James B. Motley, United States Army, Retired.

In October 1983 the United States invaded the island of Grenada. According to the contributors to this book, the invasion (code named "Urgent Fury") was a product of the increasing concern of U.S. officials with political instability in Central America in general and especially with the potential for communist

destabilization of the region.

In this context, the United States became concerned that the construction of the Port Salinas airfield by Cubans would lead to the transformation of Grenada into a Cuban support base.

This collection of essays, set in 11 chapters, has been written by the same diverse group of military officers, defense analysts, and college professors who published an earlier book dealing with the military lessons of the Falkland Islands war. In this book, they relate U.S. perceptions of the threat to Grenada's history and internal politics; assess the logic of the military option; discuss media coverage of the invasion; and consider the lessons of the intervention and its aftermath. The book includes chapter endnotes and a 33-page chronology of events for the period 15 August 1948 through 8 December 1983.

It is a concise, readable book that provides valuable insights into U.S. combat operations, intelligence deficiencies, and decision making. For that, it will appeal to both the general and the specialist reader.

A BRIGHT AND SHINING LIE: JOHN PAUL VANN AND AMERICA IN VIETNAM. By Neil Sheehan (Random House, 1988. 861 Pages. \$24.95). Reviewed by Doctor Joe P. Dunn, Converse College.

John Paul Vann was a legend in his own time. No one knew more about Vietnam. As a maverick advisor to the ARVN 7th Division in 1962-1963, at a time when optimism and "success" were the orders of the day, Vann spoke out about ARVN failings and the mishandling of the war. After his retirement from the Army in 1963, he returned to Vietnam in early 1965 as an Agency for Internal Development (AID) officer and rose to become a civilian corps commander, a status unprecedented in U.S. military history. At every point in his career, he was controversial, brilliant, dedicated, and indispensable.

Neil Sheehan, who served as *United Press International* and *New York Times* correspondent in Vietnam and later published the *Pentagon Papers*, spent 15 years preparing this book. It resembles

David Halberstam's classic *The Best and the Brightest*, an interpretative history of the war told through the lives and careers of the men who made it.

Sheehan not only depicts Vann's struggles, successes, failures, and frustrations, but provides asides about many other leading individuals, U.S. and Vietnamese. And he delves into the dark side of Vann's personal life—sexual depravity (including the statutory rape of a 15-year-old girl), neglect of family, and dishonest self-promotion.

Sheehan's interpretation of the war and condemnation of policy and strategy makes a large contribution to our understanding of the experience. But the book is too long and wandering, and often poorly focused. For all the fascinating detail, a shorter study with tighter concentration on Vann might have been preferable. The excessive length, unfortunately, will discourage many from reading a significant book that deserves widespread attention.

BATTLE CRY OF FREEDOM: THE CIVIL WAR ERA. By James M. McPherson (Oxford University Press, 1988. 904 Pages. \$35.00). Reviewed by Major Don Rightmyer, United States Air Force.

If you read only one book on the American Civil War this year, I recommend this one. It will certainly become one of the recognized single-volume histories of that war.

A professor of history at Princeton University, James McPherson has prepared this massive work as a volume in *The Oxford History of the United States*. His book covers the period from the late 1840s through the days immediately following the surrender of Robert E. Lee's Confederate army and President Abraham Lincoln's death in April 1865.

In his first eight chapters, McPherson discusses the critical 15-year period of increasing national tensions and the events that led up to the election of Lincoln as president and the subsequent move toward secession by the Southern states.

In the remaining 20 chapters, he covers in considerable detail every conceiv-

able aspect of the war years, and examines the military, economic, political, and social sides of all that went on during the war.

The thorough descriptions of the major military campaigns are complemented by clear, well-drawn maps. Equally valuable is an 18-page bibliographic essay at the end of the book that will provide an excellent reference source of books that a military professional will want to include in his reading in the years ahead.

THE DEFENCE OF DUFFER'S DRIFT. By E.D. Swinton (Avery Publishing Group, 1986. 72 Pages. \$6.95, Softbound). Reviewed by Captain David K. Taggart, United States Army.

This classic work on small unit tactics is once again available, although in a somewhat different format from previous editions. For too long, this fascinating work has been available only as a bootleg photostat copy, usually passed from hand to hand.

It is set during the Boer War. Lieutenant Backsight Forethought of Her Majesty's army is charged with the defense of Duffer's Drift, a shallow river crossing. In a series of dreams, the young officer deploys his platoon in different ways to ward off an experienced guerrilla force.

In each dream, the particular deployment ends in disaster. But our hero learns his tactical lessons and employs them in subsequent dreams until he is finally able to accomplish his mission. The lessons he learned are as valid today as they were when first published in the early 1900s.

This particular edition features maps (from an edition first published by INFANTRY in 1972 and then reprinted in 1981) that are useful in showing the effect of terrain on tactics. Also included are a series of full-page drawings from the Boer War period, which unfortunately serve only to contribute to the high cover price of this slim volume.

LONG WALK THROUGH WAR: A COMBAT DOCTOR'S DIARY. By Klaus H. Huebner (Texas A&M University Press, 1987. 207 Pages. \$17.95). Reviewed by Doctor Charles E. White, USAIS Historian.

This is a fascinating study of war. Written by a combat doctor, it is the drama of infantry in battle. Doctor Huebner served as the surgeon for the 3d Battalion, 349th Infantry Regiment, 88th Infantry Division, from September 1943 to May 1945. He traces the activities of his battalion from its final staging preparations at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, to North Africa and on up the Italian peninsula to the Brenner Pass in Austria, just 55 miles south of the Bavarian village where he was born in 1916.

Throughout the book, Huebner tells the compelling story of the boredom and excitement, fear and bravery, agony and joy, hatred and love that was the combat infantryman's daily bread. As he writes, "I walked with the men who carried guns and slugged it out on foot. I treated the wounded where they fell." Often, that meant setting up his battalion aid station in the nearest available place that offered some protection and comfort for the wounded. He and his medical personnel were in constant danger from small arms, mortar, and artillery fire, as well as from mines, booby traps, and occasional sniper fire.

Every infantry commander should read this book, because Huebner writes about one aspect of war that only recently has been explored.

THE WAR THE INFANTRY KNEW, 1914-1919: A CHRONICLE OF SERVICE IN FRANCE AND BELGIUM. By Captain J.C. Dunn. A reprint of the 1938 edition (Jane's 1987. 613 Pages. \$29.95). Reviewed by Captain Harold E. Raugh, Jr., United States Army.

It is not the generals who engage the enemy in combat, and in the case of the British Army in World War I on the western front, it appears it was a rare occasion for a general officer even to visit a front-line trench. It is the battalion, company, and platoon commanders, and especially the noncommissioned officers and privates, who bear the brunt of battle. They are the ones with the most interesting stories to tell.

This is a wonderful book. It is a compilation of factual, personal accounts of commissioned and enlisted members of the 2d Battalion, The Royal Welch Fusiliers, a distinguished regiment that

served on active service throughout the Great War. Among its members were the noted authors Robert Graves and Siegfried Sassoon.

Originally published in a limited edition in 1938 and anonymously edited by the highly decorated regimental medical officer, Captain J.C. Dunn, this is not just a tome of mundane facts and boring accounts. The editor, after reading many unsatisfactory and embellished World War I memoirs, decided to present a wide perspective of the war as seen by the members of an infantry battalion, including "details of trench life, raids and battles, billeting, delousing, the local population, types of recruits, morale, rations, humour and entertainments."

The life of an infantry battalion in war is a dynamic and multifaceted event, and this book chronicles a particular battalion's everyday activities and the feelings of its members in a singularly effective manner.

Keith Simpson, a former faculty member at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, has written an enlightening and informative introduction to this edition. In it he describes the life of Captain Dunn ("more cut out for a general than a doctor," said one regimental soldier), the somewhat controversial evolution of the book, and the relationship of Sassoon, Graves, Dunn, and a host of other individuals to the regiment. It also has more than two dozen pages of easy-to-read sketch maps to help the reader better understand the battles mentioned in the text. A complete index and glossary supplement the accounts, and a specially researched photograph section adds much to the book's value.

After the original edition was published in 1938, one reviewer noted it was "one of the finest of all War books." That comment was an understatement. This is a book that should be required reading for all infantrymen.

RECENT AND RECOMMENDED

NATO STRATEGY AND NUCLEAR DEFENSE. By Carl H. Amme. Contributions in Military Studies Number 69. Greenwood Press, 1988. 208 Pages. \$37.95.

1989 MILITARY HISTORY CALENDAR.

By Raymond R. Lyman. Paladin Press, 1988. \$8.95.

A COMPANY OF HEROES: THE AMERICAN FRONTIER, 1775-1783. By Dale Va Every. A Reprint of the 1962 Edition. William Morrow, 1988. 328 Pages. \$9.95, Softbound.

POLISHING UP THE BRASS: HONORABLE OBSERVATIONS ON MODERN MILITARY LIFE. By Michele McCormick. Stackpole, 1988. 160 Pages. \$8.95, Paperback.

"WOULD THE INSECTS INHERIT THE EARTH?" AND OTHER SUBJECTS OF CONCERN TO THOSE WHO WORRY ABOUT NUCLEAR WAR. Compiled and edited by Jack C. Greene and Daniel J. Stron. Pergamon-Brassey's, 1988. 78 Pages. \$9.95, Softbound.

NUCLEAR WAR AND NUCLEAR STRATEGY: UNFINISHED BUSINESS. By Stephen J. Cimbala. Contributions in Military Studies Number 68. Greenwood Press, 1987. 288 Pages. \$39.95.

SOE IN THE FAR EAST. By Charles Cruickshank. Oxford University Press, 1984. \$25.00.

THE FIRE OF LIBERTY: THE AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE SEEN THROUGH THE EYES OF THE MEN AND WOMEN THE STATESMEN AND SOLDIERS WHO FOUGHT IT. Compiled and edited by Esmond Wright. St. Martin's, 1984. \$19.95.

THE HALF WAR: PLANNING U.S. RAPID DEPLOYMENT FORCES TO MEET A LIMITED CONTINGENCY, 1960-1983. By Robert F. Haffa, Jr. Westview Press, 1984. 277 Pages. \$25.00, Softbound.

NUCLEAR AMERICA: MILITARY AND CIVILIAN NUCLEAR POWER IN THE UNITED STATES, 1940-1980. By Gerard H. Clarfield and William M. Wiecek. Harper and Row, 1984. 518 Pages. \$19.95.

WAR BIRDS: DIARY OF AN UNKNOWN AVIATOR. A Reprint of the 1926 Edition. By John MacGavock Grider. Edited by Elliot White Springs. Texas A&M University Press, 1988. 277 Pages. \$17.95.

GENTLEMEN OF THE BLADE: A SOCIAL AND LITERARY HISTORY OF THE BRITISH ARMY SINCE 1660. By G.W. Stepher Brodsky. Contributions in Military Studies Number 70. Greenwood Press, 1988. 224 Pages. \$39.95.

TO CONQUER A PEACE: THE WAR BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO. By John Edward Weems. A Reprint of the 1974 Edition. Texas A&M University Press, 1988. 500 Pages. \$16.95, Softbound.

THE LONG MARCH ON ROME: THE FORGOTTEN WAR. By Charles Whiting David and Charles, 1988. 160 Pages. \$22.95, Softbound.

SOME DESPERATE GLORY: THE WORLD WAR I DIARY OF A BRITISH OFFICER, 1917. By Edwin Campion Vaughan. Reprint. First printed in England in 1981. Henry Holt, 1988. 232 Pages. \$19.95.

SOVIET MILITARY POWER: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE THREAT, 1988. Office of the Secretary of Defense, April 1988. USGPO S/N 008-000-00488-9. 175 Pages. \$10.00, Softbound.

